

A Message from our Chapter Chair & Director

Dear members,

You may have noticed that Sierra Club Maine is now using the term “climate justice” when describing what we do. Here’s why:

Climate justice is at the heart of solving the climate crisis. It acknowledges that climate change has a much more significant impact on marginalized communities including social, economic, public health, and other adverse impacts. One of the fundamental tenets of the climate justice movement is to create real sustainable solutions to the climate crisis while centering the marginalized communities that are most affected.

Sierra Club Maine is leaning into the climate justice movement. Our staff and volunteer leaders have been learning about how the conservation movement has perpetuated inequity and racism - removing indigenous people from their land and restricting access to wild places, for example - and we recognize our responsibility to ensure that our work uplifts

marginalized communities, not hinder them even further.

We don’t have all of the answers. But as we continue our climate and conservation work, we are now asking ourselves new questions:

- *How do we ensure that our solutions are not perpetuating harm to community members who are people of color, Black, Indigenous, differently-abled, living in poverty, or are otherwise not in positions of power?*
- *How do we shift power and agency to groups of people who have been historically marginalized and blocked from power?*
- *What should our communities look like when climate justice goals are met?*

The problems we face are world wide, and solutions to the climate crisis need to address issues both at home and abroad. This is no small feat. We will need to change both individual habits

as well as the systems that have perpetuated inequality and the climate crisis.

No matter who you are or what your life journey has been, we welcome you to join us and work together to bring about lasting change and sustainable practices that will allow all to thrive now and in the future.



Sue Levene
SUE LEVENE
Chapter Chair



Sarah Leighton
SARAH LEIGHTON
Chapter Director

Exciting Changes at Sierra Club Maine

Thanks to a very generous donation received earlier this year, we’ve been able to restructure our program staff and hire a new person to increase our capacity! Matt Cannon is now serving as our State Conservation and Energy Director and Ania Wright is now serving as our Legislative and Political Specialist. And, we are excited to announce our newest team member - Nyalat Biliew, our Chapter’s Grassroots Organizer!

Nyalat will play a critical role in organizing and supporting communities across Maine through our Community & Climate Action Teams. Nyalat comes to us with an extensive organizing background. She has organized in support of environmental justice and health, education, and racial equity. Nyalat has a burning passion for social justice and ensuring that marginalized voices and experiences are centered and valued. During her downtime she enjoys playing basketball and pickleball, hiking, crocheting clothes, and traveling worldwide.



Nyalat has traveled to 5 (Africa, North America, South America, Australia, and Asia) of the 7 Continents and hopes to see Antarctica soon. We are thrilled to have Nyalat join our team!

Local Leads the Way

Powerful change starts from the ground up. In January, Sierra Club Maine joined the Mount Desert Island based A Climate to Thrive (ACTT) to co-facilitate Local Leads the Way, a coalition space for local climate and community leaders statewide to share knowledge and build skills. By working to support community groups across the state, Local Leads the Way hopes to connect and empower people to change their town or city and to inspire others to join the movement.

Grassroots efforts have the power and advantage of knowing the people, culture, and environment in their area to create change that will lead to a better future for all, so supporting these local leaders is critical to the broader climate justice movement. Since January, the group has met monthly for trainings and discussions, covering topics ranging from strategic planning, cooperative solar ownership models, [Continued on page 2.](#)

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and how to incorporate equity, inclusion, and justice principles into group practices.

The power of the group comes from the opportunity for knowledge sharing. Groups are able to share what has worked in their community, what hasn't, and what their challenges have been. "Local Leads the Way focuses on community-driven climate action and solutions," says ACTT Executive Director Johannah Blackman. "These are initiatives planned and developed through community leadership. Such initiatives are directly connected to the needs of the communities they are intended to serve and therefore highly able to meet those needs while also addressing other challenges facing these communities."

Local Leads the Way continues to meet virtually on the first Monday of each month at 4:00pm. For more information, or to join, please contact maine.chapter@sierraclub.org.

WHAT WILL YOUR LEGACY BE?

August was National Make-A-Will Month. Did you celebrate by making a will to take care of your family and the environment that you love? Writing a will is one of those tasks that can fall by the wayside—but luckily, you can use online services like www.freewill.com to create yours in under 20 minutes.

Everyone needs a will, whether you're 18 or 80. And, there's no better moment than now to find some peace of mind in planning for the future. While you're writing your will, you'll also have the opportunity to join the amazing people who have helped Sierra Club Maine by including legacy gifts in their wills.

There is no greater commitment to nature than to ensure it's cared for after you're gone. Whatever legacy you create during your lifetime can continue, in your name, with a bequest to Sierra Club Maine through the Sierra Club Foundation.



For more information, please contact Sarah at sarah.leighton@sierraclub.org or 207-761-5616. When there's a will there's a way to protect the environment!

JOIN SIERRA CLUB MAINE OUTINGS

Our outings program is growing!

We currently have 4 active outings leaders who have been leading hikes from Kittery and up the coast through Searsport and beyond. Check out the events calendar on our website (sierraclub.org/maine) and our Sierra Club Maine Hiking group on Meetup (meetup.com/sierra-club-maine-hiking) and come join us—all are invited! You will meet folks who are interested in the environment just like you and maybe even learn something you didn't know about like local nature and our activism efforts.



Sears Island, Searsport, Maine



Tumbledown Mountain, Franklin County, Maine



Brave Boat Headwaters, Kittery, Maine

If you are interested in leading outings or helping us organize Sierra Club Outings in your area, please let us know by emailing maine.chapter@sierraclub.org.

Local Elections Matter: Get Out and Vote!

It's been a complex year for climate and social justice. change to Nationally, the Inflation Reduction Act was continuously stalled, the Supreme Court has made numerous disastrous decisions, and our delicate democracy has taken us backwards.

However, amidst federal inaction and disappointment, Maine has continued to see progress. In 2022, we saw strong legislative action on climate, clean energy, and workforce development in line with the Maine Won't Wait Climate Action Plan. In July, Governor Janet Mills signed an executive order to safeguard reproductive healthcare and to protect healthcare providers.

In order to continue to protect the people of Maine and prepare for the climate crisis, we

must ensure that we elect and re-elect climate and social justice champions. The upcoming election on Tuesday, November 8th is critical to maintaining the progress we have made and to continue to advocate for stronger climate and social justice initiatives.

Useful voting information:

VOTE EARLY BY ABSENTEE BALLOT

You can order your ballot at tinyurl.com/MEVoterInfo. You can also vote absentee in person at your town hall up until the Thursday before election day (November 3rd, 2022). Absentee ballots can be sent in by mail but they must be received before or on Election Day. If necessary, you can bring in your ballot (with an envelope!) on Election Day in the event you don't have a chance to return it sooner.

VOTE IN-PERSON

To find your voting location go to tinyurl.com/MEVoterLookup. Register on or before Election Day: For information on registering before Election Day check out the Voter Registration Guide at maine.gov. Mainers can register to vote on Election Day at their local polling place. Here's what to bring:

- If you voted in Maine before, you will not

need to provide ID to vote.

- If you are a first-time Maine voter and you registered by mail without providing a copy of a Maine driver's license, ID card, current utility bill, bank statement, or a government check or document, you may be asked to show one of these documents in order to vote.
- If you don't have an ID or proof of your residence, you can cast a "challenged ballot." You may be asked to provide ID at some point afterward for your ballot to count.

MORE THINGS YOU CAN DO

- Support and contribute to Clean Election Candidates.
- Make calls for your candidate. Whether you belong to a major party, a minor party, or are fiercely independent, help a local candidate who shares your values run for office this year.
- Write letters to the editor to support our endorsed candidates. You can find our letter to the editor guide online at sierraclub.org/maine/write-ltr
- Be a changemaker! Help us drive political change. Contact Sierra Club Maine's volunteer Political Team leader, Claudia King at maine.chapter@sierraclub.org to find out how you can help.



Sierra Club Maine Endorsed Candidates

Sierra Club Maine's Political Team has worked hard through the summer to research and review questionnaires of candidates in Maine's various federal and state elections. Following several months of review and discussion, the team recommended the following endorsements which were subsequently approved by the Chapter's Executive Committee. Many thanks to the Political Team for their hard work. Now, let's back their efforts by doing everything we can to get these forward-thinking, environmentally-friendly candidates elected on November 8th!

This list is up to date as of August 3rd, 2022. For an up-to-date list of Chapter endorsements, please visit our website: sierraclub.org/maine.

FEDERAL OFFICES

U.S. House of Representatives (Dist. 1):

Chellie Pingree

STATE OFFICES

Governor: Janet T. Mills

SENATE

SD 1: Troy Jackson

SD 7: Nicole Grohoski

SD 8: Mike Tipping

SD 9: Joe Baldacci

SD 12: Anne "Pinny" Beebe-Center

SD 13: Cameron Reny

SD 14: Craig Hickman

SD 20: Bettyann Sheats

SD 21: Peggy Rotundo

SD 23: Matthea Daughtry

SD 24: Eloise Vitelli

SD 25: Teresa Pierce

SD 27: Jill Duscon

SD 28: Benjamin Chipman

SD 29: Anne Carney

SD 30: Stacy Brenner

SD 31: Donna Bailey

SD 32: Henry Ingwersen

HOUSE

HD 14: Lynne Williams

HD 21: Barbara Cardone

HD 23: Amy Roeder

HD 25: Laurie Osher

HD 26: James Dill

HD 31: Richard Evans

HD 39: Janice Dodge

HD 40: Stanley Zeigler

HD 41: Victoria Doudera

HD 44: William Pluecker

HD 46: Lydia Crafts

HD 47: Evan Goodkowsky

HD 48: Holly Stover

HD 49: Allison Hepler

HD 51: Rebecca Jauch

HD 55: Daniel Shagoury

HD 57: Tavis R Hasenfus

HD 64: Colleen Madigan

HD 74: Gregory Kimber

HD 81: Daniel Sipe

HD 86: Jessica Fay

HD 93: Margaret Craven

HD 94: Kristen Cloutier

HD 99: Cheryl Golek

Make sure to check your district before voting this November!

In 2021, Maine went through a redistricting process, which happens every ten years to reflect population changes. You can check your Congressional, State House, State Senate, and County Commissioner districts at tinyurl.com/MEVoterLookup

HD 100: Dan Ankeles

HD 102: Melanie Sachs

HD 103: Arthur Bell

HD 108: Maureen Terry

HD 109: James Boyle

HD 110: Stephen Moriarty

HD 111: Amy Kuhn

HD 114: Benjamin Collings

HD 116: Samuel Zager

HD 118: Rachel Talbot Ross

HD 119: Charles Skold

HD 121: Christopher Kessler

HD 122: Lois Reckitt

HD 123: Rebecca Millett

HD 127: Morgan Rielly

HD 129: Maggie O'Niell

HD 131: Lori Gramlich

HD 133: Marc Malon

HD 135: Daniel Sayre

HD 144: Daniel Norwood

HD 146: Walter Runte

HD 149: Tiffany Roberts

HD 150: Michele Meyer

HD 151: Kristi Mathieson

TAKE THIS TWO QUESTION SURVEY!

➔ **Do you want to save Maine's environment while reducing your taxes?**

➔ **Are you at least 70½ years or older?**

If you answered YES to the questions above, consider a charitable IRA rollover!

Use your required minimum distribution (RMD) for good. If you are at least 70½ years or older, you can satisfy your RMD and save on taxes by making a gift to support Sierra Club Maine's charitable programs through the Sierra Club Foundation directly from your IRA.

With an IRA Charitable Rollover, you can see the impact your gift has in protecting Maine's environment throughout your lifetime.

Funds remaining in retirement accounts after your lifetime are heavily taxed if left to someone other than a spouse. Many donors choose to use their IRA resources for charitable giving, while leaving other less tax burden assets to family and friends.

Designating your gift to "Sierra Club Maine" will protect Maine's environment for generations to come.

For more information, please contact Sarah:

sarah.leighton@sierraclub.org | 207-761-5616

The Tide is Turning, but More Work Remains to Restore Tribal Sovereignty

By James McCarthy

There were encouraging signs in the second session of the 130th Legislature that the tide is turning for the Wabanaki tribes, which have been pushing without much success for more than 40 years to remove jurisdictional roadblocks and inequities limiting their self-governance under the 1980 Maine Indian Land Claims Settlement Act.

This session, they were joined by a highly motivated and dedicated grassroots lobbying effort involving citizens from every corner of Maine.

Under the umbrella of the Wabanaki Alliance, more than 100 nonprofit, faith-based, environmental and social justice organizations, including the Sierra Club Maine Chapter, fostered that grassroots coalition in a disciplined, results-oriented campaign dedicated to helping the tribes in Maine secure their full sovereignty.

Without doubt this coalition played an instrumental role in helping the Wabanaki tribes secure two big wins before the Legislature ended its session in early May:

- L.D. 906, a milestone bill that gives the Passamaquoddy tribe the ability to regulate its own drinking water at Sipayik. Strong public pressure, including more than 200 testimonies in support of the bill and hundreds of Mainers attending an April 11th rally in Augusta, helped this bill pass in both the House and Senate with significant majorities.¹
- L.D. 585, a bill sponsored by Gov. Mills in consultation with tribal leaders, gives each federally recognized Indian tribe in Maine exclusive control of mobile sports betting. Tribal governments plan to use revenues from the lucrative online betting market to help improve education, health care and infrastructure.²

Our big disappointment, of course, is the failure of the tribes' top priority — The Tribal Sovereignty Bill, L.D. 1626 — to make it across



Protesters assemble on the steps of the State House during the April 11 rally in support of LD 906, a bill sponsored by Passamaquoddy Rep. Rena Newell to ensure that the residents of the Passamaquoddy reservation at Sipayik have access to clean drinking water. Photo credit: James McCarthy / Wabanaki Alliance

the finish line and be signed into law by Gov. Mills.³ Approved in the House 81-55 and passed in the Senate under the hammer (no debate or roll call), it died on the appropriations table... sparing Mills the political fallout from her likely veto of the bill.

So, there is more work to be done. Tribal leaders made that point abundantly clear in their statement, which can be found on the Wabanaki Alliance website, shortly before lawmakers adjourned without completing the legislative effort to restore tribal sovereignty. "Our ancestors made sacrifices so we could be here today, and it is our sacred duty to continue to press for full restoration and recognition of

Wabanaki sovereignty," they wrote. "We look forward to continuing this work with all of our partners and allies."⁴

The Wabanaki Alliance remains committed to fulfilling that unfinished business. Although the particulars of legislation to be submitted in the 131st Legislature are not yet known, the basic talking points developed by the tribes more than a year ago remain the same:

- The 1980 Settlement Act has resulted in decades of social and economic injustice for the Penobscot, Passamaquoddy, Mi'kmaq and Maliseet tribes in Maine.
- The tribes in Maine are asking to be treated like the other 570 federally recognized tribes. Nothing more, nothing less.
- The tribes are merely asking to be able to determine their communities' futures. They should have that right on their lands without the state of Maine obstructing them.
- Securing the tribes' future will help protect the environment.
- The Wabanaki tribes have not benefited from more than 150 federal laws passed since 1980 with the exception of one due to the Settlement Act's restrictive language. L.D. 1626 can eliminate this injustice.
- When the Wabanaki communities prosper, Maine prospers.

Thousands of Mainers demonstrated by their actions earlier this year that they stand with their Wabanaki neighbors in the tribes' efforts to achieve those goals. Let's build on that coalition and finish the job of restoring the full rights of sovereignty to the Penobscot, Passamaquoddy, Mi'kmaq and Maliseet tribes in Maine.



Protesters march past the Blaine House in Augusta during the April 11 rally in support of LD 906, a bill sponsored by Passamaquoddy Rep. Rena Newell to ensure that the residents of the Passamaquoddy reservation at Sipayik have access to clean drinking water. Photo credit: James McCarthy / Wabanaki Alliance

*James McCarthy is a retired journalist whose 36-year career in Maine included 10 years as managing editor of *The Times Record* in Brunswick and seven years as a senior writer and digital editor at *Mainebiz*. He has been working with the Wabanaki Alliance's all-volunteer Communications and Social Media team since the summer of 2021.*

¹ <https://wabanakialliance.com/clean-water/>

² <https://tinyurl.com/BDNarticle>

³ <https://wabanakialliance.com/take-action/>

⁴ <https://wabanakialliance.com/wabanaki-nations-ld1626-statement/>

Protect Sears Island



Sierra Club Maine supports offshore wind (OSW) and recognizes its important role in Maine and New England's energy mix in our renewable energy future. Renewable energy development, such as offshore wind, is essential to reducing harmful greenhouse gas emissions. However, we need to be thoughtful about where we site this essential infrastructure.

The State of Maine has assembled an Offshore Wind Port Advisory Group (OSWPAG) to serve as an advisor to the Maine Department of Transportation, the Governor's Energy Office, and other state officials regarding the development of a wind port that will allow Maine to realize

the environmental and economic benefits of the rapidly developing offshore wind market in a way that reflects community values and minimizes adverse impacts. Matt Cannon, Sierra Club Maine's State Conservation & Energy Director, was selected by the Governor's office to serve as a member of the OSWPAG representing Sierra Club. Currently, the focus of this group is on developing Searsport for offshore wind infrastructure, whether to use Mack Point and/or Sears Island. You can learn more and participate at <https://bit.ly/oswpag>.

Penobscot Bay's Sears Island is one of the largest undeveloped islands on the East Coast and the largest off the coast of Maine.⁵ As part of Sierra Club's 30x30 work, it should remain undeveloped, and the State should fully utilize the port facility at Mack Point.

Sears Island and its 941 acres contains a significant network of coastal wetlands, spawning numerous species of flora and fauna. In 2007 an agreement arising from the Joint Use Planning Initiative resulted in establishing a 601-acre conservation preserve, under a Maine Coast Heritage Trust easement. It's managed by Friends of Sears Island and loved by visitors, in-state and out, who have a unique opportunity to visit one of Maine's iconic islands. The other portion of the island is owned by the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT). A haven for migratory birds and waterfowl, Sears Island

is surrounded by eelgrass beds, essential habitat for juvenile lobster, flounder, crab, cod, etc. Sears Island is very important in light of the fact that only 15% of coastal ecosystems remain nationwide.⁶ They are essential carbon sinks and provide important sea-level-rise mitigation ecosystems as highlighted by Maine Won't Wait.

The Moffat and Nichol report on OSW commissioned by the MDOT acknowledges that, "...with modifications, both the Mack Point and Sears Island sites can achieve or surpass the minimum required criteria."⁷

With other New England ports moving quickly on offshore wind, Maine needs to act now to prepare and recognize that full-scale port buildout for OSW in the Gulf of Maine will be in phases as the market determines. While a challenging balance, Mack Point provides the acreage necessary for a commercial scale offshore wind marshaling facility. An OSW port at Mack Point would consolidate heavy industry in a single, already developed location. This new clean energy infrastructure would also remove unused physical remnants of the outdated fossil fuel infrastructure and represent how we can reuse space instead of destroying pristine habitat.

⁵ <https://bit.ly/ExploreSears>

⁶ <https://bit.ly/15CoastalWetlands>

⁷ <https://bit.ly/MoffatNichol>

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

*Sierra Club Maine has been **working with communities** across the state for over 40 years.*

As a grassroots organization we believe in the power of people working together to make change happen. That's why we need your help! Your passion, skills, and experiences will help us:

- Fight the climate crisis
- Promote clean air and renewable energy
- Elect pro-environment candidates
- Hold public officials accountable
- Protect and enjoy Maine's woods and waters
- Ensure a clean and just economy

VOLUNTEERS OF ALL LEVELS ARE ENCOURAGED TO JOIN!

To get started, complete our volunteer interest form at www.sierraclub.org/maine/volunteer. Once complete, someone will follow up with you for next steps. If you have any questions, please contact us at maine.chapter@sierraclub.org or 207-761-5616.



"From climate change, to biodiversity loss, to the accumulation of toxic chemicals in our environment, to threats to our democracy; we face daunting problems in the world today. It is easy to feel helpless in the face of challenges of this magnitude.

Volunteering with the Sierra Club has provided me the support and structure to make a real difference on these issues in Maine. Come volunteer with us! Together we can have an even bigger impact."

—Patricia Rubert-Nason, Volunteer

Clean Water Act vs. Industrial Aquaculture

By Jim Merkel, Volunteer from Belfast, Maine

As the nation is celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Clean Water Act, Maine is faced with a slate of high-discharge industrial fin-fish aquaculture projects. Taken together, the cumulative tailpipes would release over 4 billion gallons of effluent per day, to grow 102,000 metric tons of fish in confinement. These monocultures are called Concentrated Aquatic Animal Production (CAAP), essentially Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO's), with 3-4 foot intake and discharge pipes and large ecological footprints for both construction and operation.⁸ Their power requirements are often 15 to 30 megawatts each, enough power for multiple Maine towns. Data taken from the permits for these projects, has the tallied nitrogen equivalent to 19 Portland, Maine sewers into some of our nation's cleanest and most productive bays and estuaries.

Any gardener understands nitrogen and how it supports plant growth. However, too much nitrogen dumped into the sea can cause harmful algal blooms (HAB), low dissolved oxygen, and lead to reductions in eelgrass. According to the CDC, the toxins produced by the algae can kill fish and make shellfish dangerous to eat. The cyanobacterial toxins in mist or sea spray have been reported to cause breathing difficulties.⁹

To gain perspective on nitrogen levels, in 2018 Portland, Maine's sewer upgrade achieved a 72% reduction in the seasonal effluent entering Casco Bay (2,437 lbs/day to 685 lbs/day). By comparison, Nordic Aquafarm's discharge permit (MEPDES) states their system would dump 1,484 pounds of nitrogen per day into Penobscot Bay. American Aquafarms in Frenchman's Bay would dump another 2,338 pounds of nitrogen per day into waters off iconic Acadia National Park. The Whole Oceans facility in Bucksport would release a staggering 7,460 pounds of nitrogen per day.

The Kingfish Maine project slated for Chandler Bay off Jonesport would output another 1,580 pounds of nitrogen per day into waters that provide the economic life-blood of the community. Toxic algal blooms could shut down shellfish

operators. Low oxygen levels could kill lobsters and fish. Eelgrass habitat, which serves as a critical nursery for marine life, can be further diminished. By exploiting a loophole in the Clean Water Act for "economic benefit," the Jonesport facility would be permitted to deplete oxygen levels by 64% as it pertains to eelgrass beds, while the Clean Water Act specifically allows only 20% reduction.



The Facility in Millinocket caught wind of the many groups opposing these polluting facilities and announced in August of 2021 to shift from salmon to zero effluent shrimp stating "Norwegian land-based salmon operators have poisoned the well," meaning, that their rivals mistakes forced their strategic shift.¹⁰ Residents of Gouldsboro, Maine voted overwhelmingly in support of a moratorium on large-scale fish farms. Several other Maine towns are now drafting moratorium legislation and tightening performance-based shoreland zoning requirements.

Weak environmental laws have left legacy chemicals including PFAS and mercury and have allowed overfishing and dams that block fish passage.

Maine's slogan, "The Way Life Should Be," pictures tall piers at low tide, a lobster pound, corn on the cob, fish chowder and a haddock burger delivered by an authentic working waterfront. Maine's jewel is its relatively pristine coastline. It fuels both the tourism and seafood sectors. Maine can't afford to get this wrong.

We have alternatives to industrial fish factories. As dams come down and fish passage is secured, river herring are returning in the mil-

lions, feeding multiple other species of fish. The fecundity of properly managed wild fisheries is astonishing and wherever given the chance, the comeback has been impressive.¹¹ Maine's future can also include small to modest-sized oyster and seaweed aquaculture, zero-effluent (and sludge) fin-fish polycultures, all operated by many small-holders. This circular seafood economy returns profits to the community while restoring marine environments.

Maine's governmental regulators should also make a strategic shift and enforce the Clean Water Act requirements for "best available technology" and require that aquaculture systems are fully closed and release zero discharge into the environment. These systems would have no degradation of receiving waters and meet the original intent of the Clean Water Act.

⁸ <https://bit.ly/CAAPdefinition>

⁹ <https://bit.ly/CDCAlgalBloom>

¹⁰ <https://bit.ly/Norwegiansalmon>

¹¹ <https://bit.ly/AlewivesMaine>

PUT YOUR DONOR ADVISED FUND TO WORK

Your gift from your donor advised fund to Sierra Club Maine will immediately be put to work protecting Maine's environment. Every year, we work with hundreds of committed volunteers across the state to have an even greater impact and return on your investment. Donor advised funds are made to the Sierra Club Foundation and are only designated to Maine if you instruct the Foundation to do so.

FOR MORE INFO, PLEASE CONTACT SARAH:
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 207-761-5616

Summer Legal Internship Experience

By Logan Hagerty, Legal & Policy Intern



I am proud to have worked alongside Sierra Club Maine's Legislative Team this summer, in researching and drafting legislation to be submitted during the 131st Maine Legislature.

I gained so much knowledge in my role as legal and policy intern, mostly because Sierra Club members extended their time to brainstorm pertinent issues. I attended Conservation and Energy Team meetings with volunteers and members of other environmental organizations. These experiences provided me with an invaluable knowledge base to draft legislation

concerning renewable energy project development and on-bill financing.

There is important legislation in the works that will let Maine, New England, and our nation meet shared climate goals. It's an exciting and promising time to advance climate and environmental justice. As a Maine resident, it was inspiring to see the Sierra Club coordinate and tackle those issues. I found it meaningful to identify and potentially remedy existing gaps in the law. For example, a pilot study into on-bill financing could advance regional housing production goals. Additionally, distributed generation could benefit from an authority which streamlines energy project siting, by forecasting social and environmental concerns

at the earliest procurement stage.

As part of my internship duties, I provided feedback on a draft bill for a commuter rail in Maine. Similar commuter rail efforts in other states have stagnated, despite public endorsement and demonstrated need. But meaningful developments are oftentimes contentious, and supporting meaningful change can be a daunting task. I am grateful for the Chapter staff who extended their resources, contacts, time, and knowledge to support necessary, exciting, and imminent change.

My time with Sierra Club Maine made me even more eager and inspired to practice environmental law, and work towards a more sustainable and just planet.

Legislative Team Tackles Bill Planning

What does it take for a bill to become law in Maine? This summer, Sierra Club Maine's volunteer Legislative Team took their learned experience from past bill campaigns to set us up for success for the 131st Legislative Session.

In the spring, the team identified policy gaps and organized themselves into working groups to begin researching, writing, and preparing campaign plans for ambitious bills. Ideas ranged from finding ways to support research and development for sustainable aquaculture systems to preserving old growth forests, to creating a commuter rail plan for the state.

John Fitzgerald, a member of Sierra Club Maine's Executive Committee and Legislative Team, has been working on various drafts over the summer, including a Citizens' Oversight Bill that will create several tools to empower citizens to participate in improving and enforcing state regulations, and legislation to bring Maine's wildlife laws up to date so as to better restore and conserve Maine's rich native biological diversity. As he recalled, "I dove right into that since seeing what is needed in public interest and environmental legislation, drafting it, and helping enact and enforce it is what I studied

in college and law school...I like to think of my eagerness and energy as being both a steady dedication and a reward as well given the constant pleasure of working with the able staff and volunteers of the Maine Chapter of the Sierra Club and their allies."

On the importance of planning, Fitzgerald says "planning this far ahead will allow us and our allies, including other conservation, citizens' groups and responsible unions, trades and farming groups, local governments, legislators and folks within the Administration, to refine the ideas and approaches well in advance, to line up support and combine lobbying with our endorsements to leverage what Sierra Club can do."

After the election in November, the Maine Legislature will convene in Augusta in early 2023 to begin their session. Sierra Club Maine doesn't sit back and wait for change, and our team will be ready in 2023 to bring our legislative goals to the State House!

Interested in joining Sierra Club Maine's volunteer Legislative Team?

Call Ania at 207-761-5616 or email her at ania.wright@sierraclub.org.



DONATE YOUR OLD CAR, BOAT, MOTORCYCLE, OR RV

Donating an old car, boat, motorcycle, or RV to Sierra Club Maine has a lasting impact on our work advancing climate solutions, fighting for clean air and water, and keeping our wild places wild.

Donating is easy and someone will come to you to pick up your donation for free. Simply call 855-337-4377 or visit online at www.sierraclubfoundation.careasy.org and make sure to designate your donation to "Sierra Club Maine."

Sierra Club Maine's 2022

ANNUAL CELEBRATION

September 16 | 5-7PM | Portland

In line with our vision and values for climate justice, we are trying something new for our annual celebration! On September 16th, we will be hosting a panel of local activists facilitated by Representative Chellie Pingree on the importance of activism, in order to highlight the importance of intersectional and justice centered solutions to the climate crisis!



PHOTO BY NATALIE CHITWOOD FOR THE LUUPE

PANELISTS

LUKE SEKERA-FLANDERS

Community Water Action Co-founder and Sierra Club Political Team Member

SAFIYA KHALID

Community Organizing Alliance Founder & Executive Director

ELAYNE RICHARD

Grandmother's for Reproductive Rights Education Coordinator

Best of all, the proceeds raised from this event will be divided equally among Sierra Club Maine and the organizations our panelists represent because we're all in this together!

SPACE IS LIMITED! Register today at tinyurl.com/SCMEcelebration to join us at our annual celebration on September 16th from 5-7pm at Rising Tide Brewery in Portland.

Vote for the Open 2023

SIERRA CLUB MAINE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER POSITIONS

Sierra Club Maine's Executive Committee, composed of up to 11 volunteers, sets the long term goals and strategies for the Chapter's critical climate justice work here in Maine. There are currently six open positions for two-year terms starting in 2023.

Voting for Executive Committee positions will occur between **Sept 15th and Oct 15th** and can be done at www.sierraclub.org/maine/chapter-elections or by calling 207-761-5616.



DONATE STOCK FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Did you know you can donate stock to support Maine's environment? Donating stock shares is a win-win-win situation because your gift is tax deductible and you avoid paying capital gains while helping us to continue our mission to explore, enjoy, and protect the environment.

Want to support our legislative work? You may also make a non-tax deductible donation of stock to support us in championing pro-environment laws and policies in Augusta.

For more information on making either tax or non-tax deductible donations of stock, please contact Sarah at or 207-761-5616 or sarah.leighton@sierraclub.org.

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"To explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the Earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the Earth's ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out these objectives."